

**BOROUGH OF ROCKY HILL
COUNCIL MINUTES
REORGANIZATION/REGULAR MEETING
JANUARY 2, 2006**

The reorganization meeting of the Borough Council of the Borough of Rocky Hill was called to order by Mayor George Morren at 7:00 PM. Mayor Morren led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag followed by a moment of silent meditation. Mayor Morren noted statement of compliance that the meeting has been properly advertised in the December 31, 2004, issue of the Somerset Spectator and is being held in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act.

SWEARING IN OF NEW COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Mr. Brian Griner took the oath of office for a three year term as a member of Rocky Hill Borough Council as administered by Borough Clerk Raymond Whitlock.

Mr. Brad Merritt took the oath of office for a three year term as a member of Rocky Hill Borough Council as administered by Borough Clerk Raymond Whitlock.

APPOINTMENT TO UNEXPIRED TERM OF COUNCILMAN MORREN

Clerk Whitlock summarized letter received in December from the Republican Committee recommending the following individuals to fill the unexpired term of Councilman Morren: Tom Roshetar, Charles Pihokken, Eileen Uhrik. It was noted that the Committee highly strongly recommended the appointment of Ms. Uhrik.

The floor was opened to the public for questions/comments:

Courtney White, resident – In response to Ms. White's request, Mayor Morren provided an overview of the actions taken at the December meeting in regard to this appointment.

Hearing no other questions/comments the floor was closed to the public.

Motion was made by Merritt for the appointment of Eileen Uhrik to the unexpired term with a second by Batchelder. Roll call: Batchelder-aye, Griner-aye, Merritt-aye, Zimmerman-aye; Witt-absent. Motion carried.

During a brief intermission, Rev. William Schutter, Pastor, First Reformed Church of Rocky Hill, wished all a happy new year, a year of new beginnings, and urged focus be put on bringing the community together.

Ms. Eileen Uhrik took the oath of office for the unexpired Council vacancy (through 12/31/06) as administered by Borough Clerk Raymond Whitlock.

MAYORAL APPOINTMENTS

The Mayoral appointments were read in full (see Appendix 1) and moved for approval by Zimmerman with the exception of the Borough Auditor appointment which was held over. Motion seconded by Batchelder. Roll call: Batchelder-aye, Griner-aye, Merritt-aye, Uhrik-aye, Zimmerman-aye; Witt-absent. Motion carried.

COUNCIL COMMITTEES

Mayor Morren read in full the designation of Council Committees and Council Representatives (see Appendix 2) Motion to approve the appointments was made by Merritt with a second by Batchelder. Roll call: Batchelder-aye, Griner-aye, Merritt-aye, Uhrik-aye, Zimmerman-aye; Witt-absent. Motion carried.

APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

Mayor Morren read the appointments and reappointments to the following Boards and Committees (attached as Appendix 3):

Planning Board – Motion to approve was made by Merritt with a second by Batchelder. Roll call: Batchelder-aye, Griner-aye, Merritt-aye, Uhrik-aye, Zimmerman-aye; Witt-absent. Motion carried.

Board of Health – It was noted that there were no reappointments and the one vacancy will be held over.

Recreation Committee – Motion to approve was made by Zimmerman with a second by Batchelder. Roll call: Batchelder-aye, Griner-aye, Merritt-aye, Uhrik-aye, Zimmerman-aye; Witt-absent. Motion carried.

Shade Tree Commission – Motion to approve was made by Merritt with a second by Zimmerman. Roll call: Batchelder-aye, Griner-aye, Merritt-aye, Uhrik-aye, Zimmerman-aye; Witt-absent. Motion carried.

Municipal Grants Committee – Motion to approve was made by Griner with a second by Batchelder. Roll call: Batchelder-aye, Griner-aye, Merritt-aye, Uhrik-aye, Zimmerman-aye; Witt-absent. Motion carried.

Emergency Management Council – Motion to approve was made by Zimmerman with a second by Batchelder. Roll call: Batchelder-aye, Griner-aye, Merritt-aye, Uhrik-aye, Zimmerman-aye; Witt-absent. Motion carried.

APPOINTMENT OF COUNCIL PRESIDENT

The floor was opened by Mayor Morren for nominations for the position of Council President for the year 2006. Mr. Griner nominated Richard Batchelder with a second by Ms. Uhrik. Hearing no other nominations, the floor was closed for nominations. Roll call: Batchelder-aye, Griner-aye, Merritt-aye, Uhrik-aye, Zimmerman-nay; Witt-absent. Motion carried.

RESOLUTIONS

The following resolutions, as filed in the Borough Clerk's Office and attached hereto as Appendix 4 were adopted as follows:

RULES OF ORDER – In response to questioning by Mr. Merritt as to whether this resolution contradicts the existing Borough Council by-laws, Attorney Cruz advised that it does not and it follows past practice. Motion was made to approve by Merritt conditioned that provisions be made for public comments after the "Engineer's Report" segment of the meeting. Motion seconded by Zimmerman. Roll call: Batchelder-aye, Griner-aye, Merritt-aye, Uhrik-aye, Zimmerman-aye; Witt-absent. Motion carried.

APPOINTMENT OF BOROUGH ATTORNEY – Clarification was made per request of Mr. Zimmerman as to whether the appointment was for Attorney Cruz or the firm of which he is employed. Motion was made by Batchelder for the appointment of Albert E. Cruz, Esq. of DeFrancesco, Bateman, Coley, Yospin, Kunzman, Davis, and Lehrer, P.C. as Borough Attorney/Corporation Counsel with a second by Zimmerman. Roll call: Batchelder-aye, Griner-aye, Merritt-aye, Uhrik-aye, Zimmerman-aye; Witt-absent. Motion carried.

APPOINTMENT OF BOROUGH AUDITOR – Held over.

APPOINTMENT OF BOROUGH ENGINEER – Motion to appoint Neil VanCleaf, P.E. of VanCleaf Engineering as Borough Engineer was made by Zimmerman with a second by Merritt. Roll call: Batchelder-aye, Griner-aye, Merritt-aye, Uhrik-aye, Zimmerman-aye; Witt-absent. Motion carried.

APPOINTMENT OF BOROUGH PROSECUTOR – Motion to appoint Raymond J. Stine of DeFrancesco, Bateman, Coley, Yospin, Kunzman, Davis, and Lehrer, P.C. as Borough Prosecutor was made by Zimmerman with a second by Griner. Roll call: Batchelder-aye, Griner-aye, Merritt-aye, Uhrik-aye, Zimmerman-aye; Witt-absent. Motion carried.

REORGANIZATION MEETING 2007 – Motion to approve resolution for reorganization meeting of 2007 for January 1, 2007, at 12:00 Noon was made by Merritt with a second by Batchelder. Roll call: Batchelder-aye, Griner-aye, Merritt-aye, Uhrik-aye, Zimmerman-aye; Witt-absent. Motion carried.

MEETING SCHEDULE/POSTING – Motion to approve resolution was made by Zimmerman with a second by Griner. Roll call: Batchelder-aye, Griner-aye, Merritt-aye, Uhrik-aye, Zimmerman-aye; Witt-absent. Motion carried.

FEE FOR MEETING NOTICES – Motion to approve resolution with insertion of language that "self-addressed, stamped envelope be provided with request" was made by Griner with a second by Merritt. Roll call: Batchelder-aye, Griner-aye, Merritt-aye, Uhrik-aye, Zimmerman-aye; Witt-absent. Motion carried.

DESIGNATION OF OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER – Motion to approve was made by Merritt with a second by Batchelder. Roll call: Batchelder-aye, Griner-aye, Merritt-aye, Uhrik-aye, Zimmerman-aye; Witt-absent. Motion carried.

DEPOSITORY – Motion to approve Amboy National Bank as depository was made by Batchelder with a second by Griner. Roll call: Batchelder-aye, Griner-aye, Merritt-aye, Uhrik-aye, Zimmerman-aye; Witt-absent. Motion carried.

CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER/TREASURER – INVESTMENT AUTHORIZATION – Motion to approve was made by Batchelder with a second by Zimmerman. Roll call: Batchelder-aye, Griner-abstain, Merritt-aye, Uhrik-aye, Zimmerman-aye; Witt-absent. Motion carried.

INTEREST ON DELINQUENT TAXES/10 DAY GRACE PERIOD/6% YEAR END PENALTY – Motion to approve was made by Batchelder with a second by Zimmerman. Roll call: Batchelder-aye, Griner-aye, Merritt-aye, Uhrik-aye, Zimmerman-aye; Witt-absent. Motion carried.

TAX SALE AUTHORIZATION FOR TAX COLLECTOR – Motion to approve was made by Merritt with a second by Zimmerman. Roll call: Batchelder-aye, Griner-aye, Merritt-aye, Uhrik-aye, Zimmerman-aye; Witt-absent. Motion carried.

REFUND/CANCEL TAXES LESS THAN \$10.00 – Motion to approve was made by Zimmerman with a second by Merritt. Roll call: Batchelder-aye, Griner-aye, Merritt-aye, Uhrik-aye, Zimmerman-aye; Witt-absent. Motion carried.

TAX APPEALS/AUTHORIZATION FOR BOROUGH ATTORNEY – Motion to approve was made by Merritt with a second by Zimmerman. Roll call: Batchelder-aye, Griner-aye, Merritt-aye, Uhrik-aye, Zimmerman-aye; Witt-absent. Motion carried.

MAYOR’S COMMENTS:

Mayor Morren provided his message to all which included his personal motto that “small is beautiful” noting that “small” can be economical and it provides for accessible government and civic mindedness. Mayor Morren provided an overview of Borough business for the impending year to include but not limited to: the acquisition of a new fire truck, digital replacements, codification of ordinances, revamping of payroll procedures, emergency services transition, continued interlocal agreement with the South Bound Brook Police Department, and the continued quest for the modification or deterrence of the proposed WAWA super site bordering the Borough. Mayor Morren expressed his desire to initiate an open space fund referendum in the coming year in conjunction with Van Horne Park and to aid in attaining funds for Green Acres.

Motion was made by Batchelder with a second by Merritt to adjourn the reorganization meeting at 7:54 PM. Roll call: Batchelder-aye, Griner-aye, Merritt-aye, Uhrik-aye, Zimmerman-aye; Witt-absent. Motion carried.

REGULAR MEETING OF BOROUGH COUNCIL

The regular meeting was called to order at 7:54 PM.

Roll call on attendance: Mr. Richard Batchelder-aye, Mr. Brian Griner-aye, Mr. Brad Merritt-aye, Ms. Eileen Uhrik-aye, Mr. Edward Zimmerman-aye.
Absent: Mr. Jared Witt

Also present: Borough Attorney Albert Cruz, Borough Clerk Raymond Whitlock

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion to approve the regular meeting minutes of December 19, 2005, was made by Zimmerman with a second by Batchelder. Roll call: Batchelder-aye, Griner-abstain, Merritt-abstain, Uhrik-abstain, Zimmerman-aye. Motion carried.

ENGINEER’S REPORT

Engineer’s report dated December 30, 2005, from William Tanner was received and accepted. Action held over until next meeting attended by the Engineer.

ADOPT 2006 TEMPORARY BUDGET

Motion was made by Batchelder with a second by Merritt to adopt the 2006 temporary budget as presented. Roll call: Batchelder-aye, Griner-aye, Merritt-aye, Uhrik-aye, Zimmerman-aye. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF VOUCHERS/BILL LIST

Resolution

WHEREAS, the Treasurer has certified that sufficient funds are available to pay said vouchers, BE IT, THEREFORE, RESOLVED, that the following vouchers be approved for payment. Clerk Whitlock noted the addition of two vouchers to be added to the bill list: Flannagan’s - \$69,500.00 – work at VanHorne Park; Staples - \$2,498.00 – furniture for Emergency Management. In response to his request, Mr. Merritt was provided with information regarding the purchase of the furniture for emergency management. Batchelder moved approval of the resolution as amended with a second by Zimmerman. Motion carried on roll call vote – all ayes; Merritt-abstain (See Appendix 5 for Bill List)

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Action deferred to mid-month meeting.

SPECIAL BUSINESS

None at this time.

COMMUNICATIONS

Clerk Whitlock provided an overview of correspondence as received: the Borough was not awarded any road improvement grant monies by the State; thank you from the library for the Borough's continued donation; letter from Engineer Tanner advising of his request to the County for funds to aid in the sidewalk repair/replacement within the Borough; copy of letter from Engineer Tanner to the County regarding the drainage problem on Crescent Ave; copy of letter from Engineer Tanner to the State DOT requesting reduction in speed limits on Montgomery and Princeton Avenues.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Nothing addressed at this time.

NEW BUSINESS:

Police Incident – Mr. Merritt questioned the process followed with regard to police incidents investigated by the South Bound Brook Police Department relative to the Borough and the conveyance of pertinent information to Borough officials. This request is initiated by a recent occurrence that Mr. Merritt read about in the newspaper. Mayor Morren advised that he, as well as the Borough Council members are entitled to receive daily reports from the Chief of Police of South Bound Brook when his officers are conducting business within the Borough. He has been assured that the particular matter being referred to by Mr. Merritt will be disclosed upon termination of the pending investigation. Councilmen Zimmerman and Griner will be meeting with the Chief and will keep Mayor and Council apprised.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The floor was opened to the public for comments/questions.

Marge Yuschak, 55 Washington St., thanked Mayor and Council for the recent appointment to the Emergency Management Council and was directed to speak with Alan Querec regarding meeting dates.

Brian Nolan, former Mayor, offered best wishes to the Mayor and Council and expressed his support of the new Council members. Mr. Nolan requested the temporary budget be reviewed to ensure that Phase II of the VanHorne Park project is included in same. Councilman Batchelder will follow-up on this matter.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:20 PM was made by Merritt with a second by Zimmerman.
Motion carried on voice vote – all ayes.

Respectfully submitted:

Donna M. Griffiths
Deputy Clerk